

Message Text

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PAGE 01 THE HA 01067 041423Z

44-40

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 SCCT-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

SY-10 USSS-00 EB-11 DOTE-00 FAA-00 CAB-09 JUSE-00

SCS-03 SCA-01 COME-00 AID-20 TRSE-00 OMB-01 IO-14 A-01

DRC-01 CCO-00 PPT-02 /170 W
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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3062

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 1067

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, NL

SUBJ: TERRORISM: HIJACKING INCIDENT ENDING IN AMSTERDAM

REF: STATE 42383

1. REVIEW OF BRITISH AIRWAYS INCIDENT AS FAR AS CAN BE OBTAINED
THIS MORNING FOLLOWS:

2. FLIGHT BA 771, VC-10 AIRCRAFT FLYING FROM BOMBAY TO BAHRAIN,
BEIRUT AND LONDON, WAS HIJACKED TWO HOURS AFTER BEIRUT TAKEOFF
ON SUNDAY, MARCH 3 AND LANDED AT AMSTERDAM THREE HOURS LATER
WHERE IT WAS BURNED WITHOUT FATALITY OR SERIOUS INJURY TO ANY
PERSON. HIJACKERS CONSISTED OF TWO ARABIC MEN OF NATIONALITY
AND INDENTITY SO FAR UNKNOWN, WHO ARE IN DUTCH CUSTODY. PASSENGERS,
PRESUMABLY INCLUDING SEVERAL AMERICAN CITIZENS WHOM WE HAVE SO
FAR BEEN UNABLE TO INDENTIFY, ARE BEING TAKEN TO THEIR LONDON
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PAGE 02 THE HA 01067 041423Z

DESTINATION BY BRITISH AIRWAYS THIS MORNING. PASSPORTS

WERE GATHERED BY HIJACKERS AND PRESUMABLY BURNED IN AIRCRAFT ALONG WITH CABIN BAGGAGE, BUT HOLD BAGGAGE APPARENTLY ESCAPED SERIOUS DAMAGE. AT THIS WRITING AIRCRAFT IS BEING INSPECTED FOR POSSIBLE FURTHER EXPLOSIVES.

3. HIJACKERS REPORTEDLY BOARDED AIRCRAFT IN BEIRUT, WHERE ALL PASSENGERS AND CABIN BAGGAGE WERE SEARCHED ELECTRONICALLY. AFTER TAKEOFF AT 1204 GMT, WITH 92 PASSENGERS AND 10 CREW, AIRCRAFT WAS HIJACKED AT 1408 GMT BY TWO WELL-DRESSED ARABS WITH GRENADES AND PISTOLS. (AMERICAN REPORTER, AT AMSTERDAM WAS LATER TOLD BY AMERICAN PASSENGER, PETER BANKO FROM NEW YORK, THAT HE HAD NOTICED THAT THESE TWO INDIVIDUALS ON BOARDING CARRIED EQUIPMENT SUCH AS CASSETTE RECORDER AND RADIO WHICH COULD CAMOUFLAGE WEAPONS FROM ELECTRONIC DETECTION.) HIJACKERS REMOVED CREW'S HEADSETS AND OXYGEN OUTLETS, ORDERED CAPTAIN AND ENGINEER INTO TOURIST COMPARTMENT, AND THREATENED TWO REMAINING OFFICERS AT CONTROLS. THEY DIRECTED PASSENGERS TO REMOVE SHOES. IT IS UNDERSTOOD BUT NOT VERIFIED THAT HIJACKERS DIRECTED PLANE TO AMSTERDAM FOR UNKNOWN REASON. WHILE SCHIPHOL AIRPORT ORIGINALLY REFUSED LANDING PERMIT, PERMISSION WAS GIVEN AFTER PILOT REPORTED FUEL SHORTAGE AND LANDING WAS MADE AT 1716 GMT WITH AIRPORT CLOSED TO OTHER TRAFFIC. LANDING AREA WAS EFFICIENTLY CONTROLLED BY DUTCH WITH POLICE, FIRE FIGHTERS, AND AMBULANCES ON THE SPOT. PASSENGERS REMAINED CALM EVEN WITH HIJACKERS SPRINKLED FUEL MATERIAL (INCLUDING ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES) THROUGH CABIN. CHUTES WERE DEPLOYED AND PASSENGERS AND CREW EVACUATED BEFORE FIRE WAS STARTED. HIJACKERS WERE ARRESTED RUNNING FROM PLANE. TWO MINOR INJURIES WERE SUSTAINED DURING EVACUATION AND ONE PASSENGER WITH HEART CONDITION WAS HOSPITALIZED OVERNIGHT. PASSENGERS LOST WRAPS AND SHOES IN FIRE.

4. STATEMENTS OR OBJECTIVES OF HIJACKERS ARE NOT YET AVAILABLE. WE UNDERSTAND THEY ARE STILL BEING QUESTIONED.

5. AS REPORTED TELEPHONICALLY TO DEPT OPS CENTER ON EVENING OF MARCH 3, DCM WAS INFORMED BY MINTRANS WESTERTEP THAT GON HAS TAPE OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN HIJACKERS AND BEIRUT TOWER IN WHICH FORMER BOASTED THAT "NEXT HIJACKING" WOULD BE OF US AIRCRAFT. GOULD

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 04 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
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Drafter: n/a
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Executive Order: GS
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Film Number: n/a
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30 JUN 2005

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